

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SAM-01 EURE-00 SSO-00 INRE-00

INR-05 NSC-05 NSCE-00 L-01 SP-02 DODE-00 CIAE-00

PRS-01 /038 W

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O R 251800Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1151

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 1330

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SP

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTRY REACTION TO BASE TALKS

ARTICLE

REF: STATE 041423

1. CHARGE CALLED ON UNDERSECRETARY ROVIRA AT 5 PM, FEB 25, TO DISCUSS POINTS IN REFTEL. ROVIRA WAS ACCOMPANIED DURING INTERVIEW BY MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL OF NORTH AMERICAN AFFAIRS (PERINAT), AND CHARGE BY POLITICAL COUNSELOR.

2. COMMENTING ON ACOCA'S ATTRIBUTION TO HIGH SPANISH SOUCE, ROVIRA SAID FOREIGN MINISTER HAD CALLED HIM SOON AFTER ARTICLE APPEARED TO ASK HIM TO LOOK INTO IT. SINCE ARTICLE MENTIONED PRIME MINISTER ARIAS, ROVIRA WAS TRYING TO FIND OUT FROM UNDERSECRETARY OF PRESIDENCY WHETHER ARIAS HAD MADE ANY STATEMENTS ON THIS SUBJECT RECENTLY, BUT WAS STILL WAITING TO HEAR FROM HIM. SINCE SIMILAR INFORMATION REPORTED BY LA VANGUARDIA CORRESPONDENT IN BRUSSELS (MADRID 1282) UNDER SECRETARY HAD ASKED SPANISH MILITARY

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ATTACHE THERE TO LOOK INTO IT. UNDER SECRETARY CONTINUED

BY SAYING THAT HE HAD PERSONALLY ASKED GENERAL GUTIERREZ MELLADO WHETHER HE OR ANY MILITARY MEMBERS OF DELEGATION HAD RELEASED SUCH INFORMATION AND HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT NONE HAD BEEN IN CONTACT WITH THE PRESS. AT THIS POINT PERINAT INTERJECTED THAT THERE ARE "TOO MANY PEOPLE" ON SPANISH DELEGATION TO TALKS. UNDER SECRETARY AGREED, ADDING, OFFHANDEDLY, THAT HE HAD IMPRESSION THAT SOMEONE PROBABLY HAD IN FACT SAID SOMETHING, BUT HE DID NOT KNOW WHO.

3. UNDER SECRETARY CONCLUDED BY STRESSING THAT, WHATEVER SOURCE OF STATEMENTS, THEY WERE UNAUTHORIZED BY GOS. HE ASSURED THAT, NOW AND IN FUTURE, IF GOS WANTS TO CONVEY ANY POSITION TO US SIDE IT WILL DO SO THROUGH ESTABLISHED DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS, NOT THROUGH PRESS.

4. DISCUSSING TEXT OF PRESS GUIDANCE, WHICH CHARGE LEFT WITH ROVIRA, ROVIRA SAID SPANISH SIDE PLANS TO CONTINUE ANSWERING ALL INQUIRES MORE SUCCINCTLY THAN US, THAT IS, WITH "NO COMMENT." HE SAID HIS GENERAL PHILOSOPHY ON DEALING WITH THE PRESS WAS THAT THE LESS SAID THE BETTER, IF ONE HAD TO SAY SOMETHING IT SHOULD BE TRUTH. HE HAD NO OBJECTIIONS TO US LANGUAGE REFTEL, WHICH HE SAID WAS FACTUAL AND COULD DO NO HARM.

5. COMMENT: ROVIRA REASONABLY CONVINCING IN HIS DENIAL OF ANY KNOWLEDGE OF ORIGIN OF LEAK. LANGUAGE USED BY ACOCA NOURISHED HIS SUSPICION, WHICH WE SHARE, THAT SOURCE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME ONE IN PRESIDENCY, THOUGH DOUBTFUL IT WOULD HAVE BEEN ARIAS HIMSELF. WE WILL KEEP IN CLOSE TOUCH WITH MFA TO SEE WHAT THEIR INQUIRIES TO UNDER SECRETARY OF PRESIDENCY AND TO MILITARY ATTACHE IN BRUSSELS REVEAL.
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